

**Virginia Latino Advisory Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 2 – 9:05 a.m. – 3:02 p.m
Patrick Henry Building
1111 E Broad St, Richmond, VA 23219**

Minutes

In Attendance: Cecilia Barbosa (Chair), Karina Kline-Gabel (Vice-Chair), Paul Berry (Secretary), Edgar Aranda-Yanoc, Damien Cabezas, Eugene Chigna, Juan Espinoza, Melody Gonzales, Manuel Leiva, Michael Martinez, Gloria Pena Rockhold, Carmen Romero, Cecilia Williams, Jorge Yinat

Not in Attendance: Vivian Sanchez Jones, Alex Guzman, Edgar Lara, Aida Pacheco, Sergio Rimola

Guests: Rebecca Vargas-Jackson; Traci DeShazor, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth; Janice Underwood, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Brian Ball, Secretary of Commerce and Trade; Holly Coy, Deputy Secretary of Education; Erik Johnston, Director, Department of Housing and Community Development; Rachel Becker, Special Assistant for Health and Human Resources; Amelia Smith, Coordinator of Richmond Public Schools' Welcome Center; Elvira De La Cruz Macedo, Director of Latinos in Virginia Empowerment Center

Staff & Counsel: Maribel Castañeda, Director of Appointments and Director of Latino Outreach; Danielle Campbell, Special Assistant for Advisory Board Administration; Justin Bell, Assistant Attorney General; Isabel McGuire-Ruiz, VLAB Intern

Call to order: 9:05 a.m.

Cecilia Barbosa introduced the guests in the room, asked members to introduce themselves, and then called the meeting formally to order when a quorum was met.

Review and Approval of Minutes – 9:33 a.m.

Cecilia Barbosa thanked everyone for being present and presented an overview of the meeting agenda. She then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Michael Martinez made the motion, and Eugene Chigna seconded. The motion passed unanimously, with one abstention (Eugene Chigna).

Consideration of Elections Policy – 9:35 a.m.

Michael Martinez described that at the last meeting there was a discrepancy in the wording that has since been corrected. The proposed, corrected version was shared with all board members for review prior to the meeting. (c.f. infra)

Cecilia Barbosa called for a motion to approve the Elections Policy document as submitted by the VLAB Ad-Hoc Elections Governance Committee. The motion was made by Michael Martinez and seconded by Karina Kline-Gabel. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Report from Maribel Castañeda - 9:39 a.m.

Maribel Castañeda gave updates from the Governor's office.

Education: The Governor issued an executive order establishing a Virginia STEM Education Commission that has Hispanic and Latino representation. The Governor has announced approval of 53 new teacher preparation programs and 25 new degrees that will allow graduates to become teachers. He has also established an executive leadership team for school readiness.

Business: The Governor has signed an executive order to advance equity for Virginia's SWAM (Small, Women, Minority) owned businesses. He continues to consider the state procurement process and how Latino business owners can increase their participation.

Civic Engagement: \$1.5 million has been made available for funding census outreach in the Commonwealth, focusing on awareness campaigns in hard-to-reach populations. The Governor and Secretary of the Commonwealth's office have been traveling the state to raise awareness in localities.

On November 12th the Governor will hold a day-long Latinx summit – the topics will be released in the coming weeks and Maribel will reach out to VLAB members for support with the event.

Health: More than 300,000 Virginians are now enrolled in Medicaid and this number will continue to grow before the end of 2019.

Deputy Secretary DeShazor - 9:46 a.m.

Deputy Secretary DeShazor began with an update about the Virginia Complete Count Commission (VCCC). After the VCCC's creation in December 2018 it has aimed to achieve its outreach strategy. Regional town halls and job fairs have been successfully executed. There have been challenges in hiring census personnel. Deputy Secretary DeShazor emphasized that it is critical to have points of contact throughout the Commonwealth that represent the diversity of communities. The focus of the VCCC has been as follows:

- Educating the communities about the Census (who, what, where, when, and how) and connecting at the grassroots level with community groups.
- Engagement with state agencies – there have been several collaborative meetings to interlink stakeholders across state government
- Conservation & Recreation – part of the public outreach effort has included signage at state parks
- Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) – outreach at points of public service have included DMV locations
- Engaging the Departments of Medical Assistant Services, Social Services, and Education in outreach and communication efforts

Secretaries' Remarks – 10:10 a.m.

Cecilia Barbosa welcomed Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Janice Underwood who described the initiatives she is working on, including the strategic diversity and inclusion plan for the Commonwealth. The plan is designed to complement the strategic plans, with internal equity and diversity goals, that are being formulated by each Secretariat. Holding stakeholders to accountability agendas is a mission of these strategic plans.

Janice Underwood is working closely with the Secretariats and is attending listening sessions focused around different topical areas that are taking place around the Commonwealth. Additionally, she has been meeting with the various advisory boards and groups, such as VLAB.

Carmen Romero pointed out that there are several localities that have particular equity agendas and that needs might differ based on location. What best practices can be emulated from other states? Janice Underwood commented that evidence-based practices and tangible achievements through executive and agency action will demonstrate the progress made towards preestablished goals, as well as inform us on realigning the trajectory.

Jorge Yinat emphasized the importance of tracking progress through data and metrics. Gloria Peña Rockhold agreed with him and reiterated the importance of having a clearly defined vision for equity that connects to the Latinx community.

Cecilia Barbosa added that the institutionalization of equity at the legislative level, such as advisory boards, can ensure the longevity of the equity vision.

Short Break: 10:24 – 10:42

Cecilia Barbosa distributed a document to each committee chair describing that committee's contribution to the Addendum report. Each document was based on the feedback from those committees. Some committees have finalized their recommendations and others are still in development. She asked each committee to review and finalize their respective documents so that they could be compiled into an Addendum to VLAB's 2018-19 Annual Report.

There was a discussion on what to revise in the current board charter and how legislative changes will be made to ease the logistical work of the board, such as increasing the ability for the board to meet more than 4 times a year. Maribel Castañeda reported that the Administration is pursuing this legislative change this year.

There was also a question about how outside grant money or donations to the board that will help with the aims of the board will be handled – there are not clear procurement or spending rules on this currently according to Justin Bell, and he is following up with the guidelines for this.

A discussion on the VLAB Leadership awards followed. Karina Kline-Gabel described the VLAB Latinx Leadership Awards. There was a discussion about updating both the eligibility requirements and the award categories. There was a suggestion that categories be eliminated to allow for a wider range of nominations, and this will be considered at a later date. The second suggestion was to allow individuals to self-identify as Latinx instead of defining criteria for Latinx individuals.

Continuation of Secretaries' Remarks – 11:08 a.m.

Rachel Becker, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, provided updates. 320,000 Virginians have enrolled in Medicaid following Medicaid expansion. In agreement with the VLAB recommendation, the Governor is working towards removing the 40-quarter work requirement rule. She also clarified that the current requirement for lawful permanent residents under federal law is five years of residency whereas Virginia requires 40 quarters of work. Lastly, she commented that the Virginia Medicaid expansion program (Cover Virginia) is preparing to give notice to program participants that

renewal will be coming up soon. The CoverVirginia.com website is now been translated into Spanish, and the Trauma Informed Care Team resources and tools will be available in Spanish later this year.

Another area the Governor is prioritizing is maternal health, with a focus on postpartum mothers, due to increasing maternal mortality rates, poor health outcomes, opioid use, and barriers to enrollment. Eliminating barriers to access, increasing availability to services, and making comprehensive contraception available are all goals of the Governor.

The Virginia Fosters Campaign will be initiating a program that connects with church communities to raise awareness about the foster care program.

Damien Cabezas asked about obtaining demographic information on Medicaid expansion participants and what coverage gaps exist.

A discussion on the changing criteria of public charge followed, and how Virginia can mitigate the impact of rules changes at the federal level. An individual who is going through entry steps is evaluated under the definition as found in the Immigration Nationality Act and is inadmissible if they are likely to become a public charge. Redefining the criteria for public charge is being implemented as of October 15th by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). These rules are at the discretion of the Federal DHHS.

Cecilia Barbosa introduced Commerce and Trade Secretary Brian Ball who provided updates on housing, wage theft, procurement processes, and housing eviction prevention.

He described SWAM participation and how the Governor is addressing low participation rates in the Latinx community. A program is in place, but participation has traditionally been low. An RFP to conduct a study on how to expand SWAM participation was put forth last month and a vendor is expected to be selected by mid-October, with a study start window of mid-November. The study will evaluate the availability of providers and how to connect resources to small businesses.

On wage theft, the Secretary described his work on an evaluation process that can recognize companies that play by the rules and identify those that do not. He is also working with the Attorney General's office to enforce existing laws covering violations.

Following the discussion in the General Assembly last year, the Secretary is examining how his department can help decrease housing eviction rates, notably through promulgation of effective tenants' rights in languages that are accessible to all tenants.

Deputy Secretary of Education Holly Coy provided several updates, including on K-12 recruitment and retention of teachers. There has been an emphasis on recruiting teachers from diverse communities. Accreditation ratings were released recently, and for the first time since these data have been collected and disseminated, student demographics are being included in the measurement and reporting process. This helps identify and close equity gaps where disparities exist. The Deputy Secretary stressed that this is a priority as is holding schools accountable for closing those gaps. Additionally, there is a new Equity Office in the Department of Education.

The Board of Education is planning on evaluating licensure and culturally responsive pedagogy in 2020. Cecilia Barbosa mentioned that one of VLABs concerns is English as a Second Language (ESL). Deputy Secretary Coy stated that the Board of Education is looking at standards of quality and considering

recommendations that reassess how levels of comprehension are evaluated and place focus on language acquisition and staffing ratios. The final vote will take place on this at the October board meeting.

Erik Johnston, Director of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development introduced himself and stated that he would be participating in the Housing subcommittee meeting.

Lunch and Committee Meetings 12:45 – 2 p.m.

Elvira De la Cruz from Latinos in VA Empowerment Center shared the group's mission and described their outreach methods. They are a non-profit entity. Their mission is violence prevention and justice services in Latinx communities in Virginia. One major obstacle they noticed immediately was the absence of language compatibility when assessing how victims received social services; victims understood where to go to obtain them but could not access them adequately.

Next, there were service provider obstacles that the organization helped overcome. As victims navigated social service provider systems, Latinos in VA took feedback from service recipients and brought difficulties to the attention of providers.

Committee reports (recommendations and discussion topics) - 2:30 p.m.

Business – Reaching out to the bill sponsors on HB 1687 is a priority. Committee members will follow up on the status of the bill.

Procurement and contracts – SWAM procurement is a focus of the Governor's office, and the subcommittee is interested in reviewing the RFP that is out for a new contract to study SWAM availability throughout the Commonwealth.

Health – The committee discussed the expansion of Medicaid coverage for postpartum health services to one year for women under 205% of the poverty level. Automatic enrollment of postpartum women eligible for Medicaid expansion has already taken place effective September 12th. Other topics included increasing health literacy, prenatal coverage for undocumented individuals, and asking for a study on Latino health.

Civic Engagement – Topics discussed included moving forward with a VLAB forum for youth, changing language on the VLAB awards site, and creating an agenda for the Governor's summit in November.

Housing – The committee discussed adding citizenship status as a protected category.

Education – Topics of discussion: In-state tuition for all residents and teacher diversity.

Cecilia Barbosa stated that an additional recommendation being proposed is to expand Medicaid eligibility for prenatal care to undocumented residents, to prevent adverse maternal and infant health outcomes and reduce delivery and postpartum health care costs in this population. Karina Kline-Gabel made the motion to adopt this recommendation and Mike Martinez seconded it. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:02 p.m.